

tiously — watched them until they vanished among the uppermost ranks of the dwarf rhododendrons. I stood up stiffened with cold and my long waiting. In the west I saw the last pink tinge die out upon the clouds which now hid the snows. As I turned toward camp a single snowflake melted on my face, and I realized anew how grimly winter fights for supremacy far up on the world's roof."

We must make one more quotation, reflecting another side of pheasant history: Capt. Beebe says: "My survey of their haunts made me pessimistic in regard to their future. In India there seemed a slight lessening among the natives of the religious regard for wild life which has been such a boon to the birds in this densely populated part of the world. In the Malay States great rubber plantings threaten the whole fauna of some places. In Nepal and Yunnan the plume hunter is working havoc. In China the changing diet from rice to meat and the demand in Europe for ship-loads of frozen pheasants has swept whole districts clear of these birds." The great war has checked many activities that have made for the destruction of the pheasants, but this, he adds, is perhaps "the last pause in the slow, certain kismet, which from the ultimate increase and spread of mankind, must result in the total extinction of these splendid birds."

After reading this we are more than ever grateful to all who have contributed to make this beautiful work possible. While Capt. Beebe may be the only man who has studied all the types of these wonderful birds in their native haunts,— perhaps the only one who will enjoy that privilege,— his facile pen and ability as a photographer combined with the talents of his corps of artists and the generous support of Col. Kuser, have made it possible for thousands of others to enjoy the reproduction of that which it was given to him to see in reality.— W. S.

Leo Miller's 'In the Wilds of South America.'¹— When Dr. Frank M. Chapman began his investigations of South American bird life in 1911 he took with him to Colombia Leo E. Miller, a young man then quite unknown in the field of zoological exploration. So readily did Mr. Miller adapt himself to the explorer's life and such an adept field collector did he become that he was kept in South America, in the interests of the American Museum, almost continuously from that time until America entered the war. During these six years he practically circled the coast of the southern continent north of Buenos Ayres and visited every one of the republics, carrying on active collecting and exploration in eight of them.

While the technical results of at least a part of Mr. Miller's work have been published by Dr. Chapman and others, mainly in the 'Bulletin' of the American Museum, he has himself prepared the account of his travels,

¹ *In the Wilds of South America, Six Years of Exploration in Columbia, Venezuela, British Guiana, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay and Brazil.* By Leo E. Miller of the American Museum of Natural History, with over 70 illustrations and a map. New York, Charles Scribners' Sons, 1918. Svo. pp. 1-424.

elaborated from his journals, with side lights on the natural history, physical characteristics and the varied peoples of the countries which he visited and has embodied them in the attractive volume before us.

The narrative is written in a clear, unassuming manner, which holds one's attention from chapter to chapter, while excellent photographic illustrations by the author add to the interest of the text. Before we reach the bottom of the first page we encounter a description of the Brown Pelicans of Buenaventura Bay, Colombia, and scarcely a page is passed that we do not find reference to one or more representatives of the wonderful neotropical avifauna, or the less known mammals of the South American continent.

Long museum experience may give one a reasonable familiarity with South American birds, so far as the plumage of the species is concerned, but we know nothing in this way of their habits — how they occur and where; whether conspicuous or not; their relative abundance; the character of their calls, their songs, etc., and Mr. Miller's book gives us just this knowledge of the most striking species. We read his narrative and encounter one after another the birds which attract the attention of the traveller just as we do the striking features of the scenery, the plant life and the towns and villages, and can almost imagine that we are on the trail ourselves.

The opening chapters treat of some of the Colombian explorations which formed the basis of Dr. Chapman's 'Distribution of Bird Life in Colombia,' reviewed in 'The Auk' for April, 1918. Then follows a trip up the Orinoco to the mysterious Mt. Duida, and a short sojourn in British Guiana. We then pass to the Roosevelt expedition, to which Mr. Miller was attached as one of the field naturalists, and read of hunting and collecting experiences in Paraguay and Brazil and the descent of the Rio Gy-Parana, which one part of the expedition explored while Col. Roosevelt and the rest of the party descended the Rio da Duvida (now the Rio Teodoro). Mr. Miller's next expedition was down the west coast of Peru, across to central Bolivia and down into Argentina.

Besides the constant incidental mention of birds throughout the text, two chapters are devoted almost entirely to ornithological matter. One of these is entitled 'In Quest of the Cock-of-the-Rock,' a search which resulted in the discovery of the nest eggs and young of this curious, crested, scarlet Cotinga, an inhabitant of the subtropical zone of the Colombian Andes, its nesting site being the wet cliffs adjoining mountain waterfalls in the densest forest. 'Bird-nesting in Northwestern Argentina' is another chapter dealing largely with birds, including an account of a search for an obscure species of Tapacola (*Scytalopus*). Incidentally there is considerable discussion of the nesting habits of the Cowbird of the region, *Molothrus bonariensis*, and of its most frequent victim, the Ovenbird (*Furnarius rufus*). Not infrequently the Cowbird lays several eggs in the same nest and in the case of one Mockingbird's nest Mr. Miller found no less than fourteen eggs

of the intruder. Another Cowbird *M. badius* makes a nest of its own and rears its own young.

Members of the Audubon Society will be pleased to know that in Argentina there are game laws and closed seasons, and that a permit is necessary in order to collect specimens, while the collector will rejoice to learn that officials are most courteous and obliging, and that the necessary permit was secured in a few hours which included a railway journey to the nearest city.

Mr. Miller's book is one that we can heartily recommend to the general reader who wishes to know something of South America, from the everyday experience of the traveller, both in the long settled districts and in the wilderness, while it should be in the library of every ornithologist and mammalogist. The day is past when the student of this or that branch of natural science can limit his reading to technical monographs. He must know something of the animal in its natural surroundings in order to appreciate the relationship between color and background, adaptation and environment; and to enable him to extend his studies beyond the mere description of a new species based on a museum specimen. And as a contribution to this field of literature Mr. Miller's book holds an important place.

We regret that there is no index, as it is difficult to find again some paragraph that deals with a certain species in which we may be interested, and the utility of the volume is impaired to that extent. It is also regrettable that the author has seen fit to make use of the names of certain familiar North American birds — such as Red-headed Woodpecker and White-throated Sparrow — for South American species which are only remotely related to them, as in spite of the citation of the correct technical names many popular readers will imagine that these familiar birds occur in South America as migrants. In the 'Contents' there seems to be an error of some kind in dividing the book into parts. Part one, headed "Colombia," includes nine chapters all devoted to that country, but part two, headed "Venezuela," contains seventeen chapters only two of which have anything to do with this republic. This however is a trifling matter. The typography and general appearance of the volume from the standpoint of the bookmaker are excellent.— W. S.

Van Oort's Birds of the Netherlands.¹— We are in receipt of parts I and II of an important illustrated work on the birds of Holland by the well known ornithologist, Dr. E. D. Van Oort, Director of the Natural History Museum at Leiden. From a prospectus by the author and the publisher,

¹ Ornithologica Neerlandica [de Vogels van Nederland] door [Dr. E. D. Van Oort] Directeur van 's Rijks Museum van Natuurlijke Historie | te Leiden | Met ongeveer vierhonderd gekleurde Platen | 's Gravenhage | Martinus Nijhoff. [Lange Voorhout, The Hague, Holland.] Royal quarto, Part I, pp. 1-24, plates 1-10; part II, pp. 25-56, plates 11-20. [1918]. Price, 12.50 Gld. per part.